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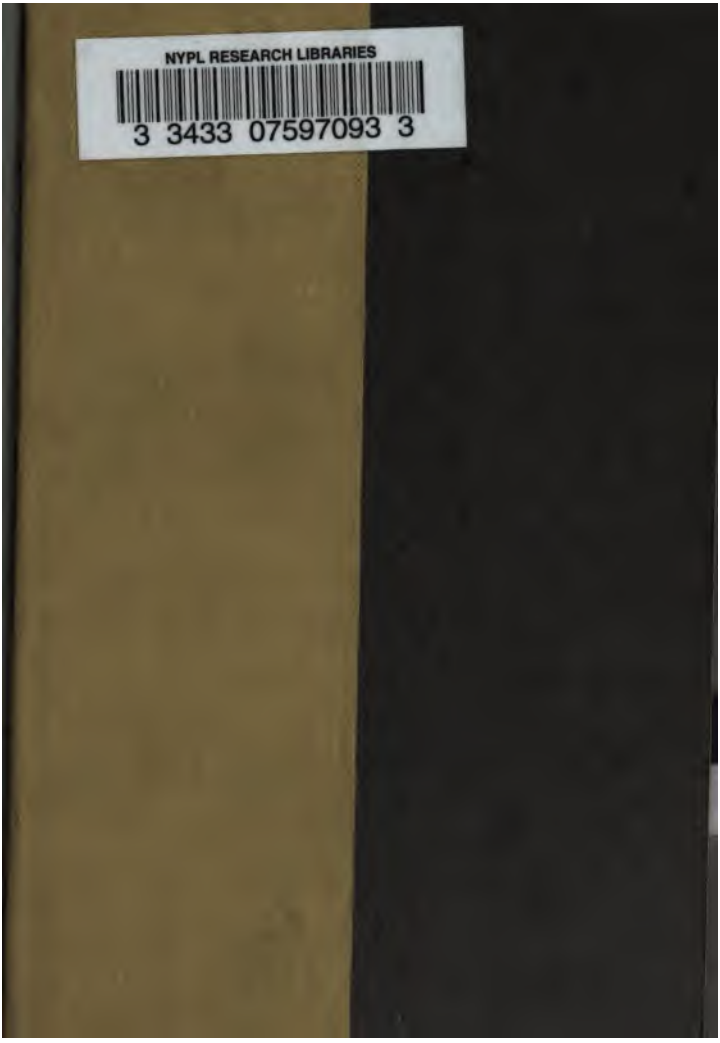
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THE

MOTHER.

MRS. E. HENDERSON.

NEW-YORK:
J. C. RIKER, 129 FULTON-STREET.
1847.

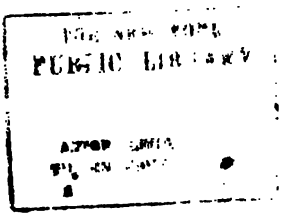
MY FATHER

AND

MY MOTHER.

BY MRS. HELEN E. HENDERSON.

NEW-YORK:
J. C. RIKER, 129 FULTON-STREET.
1847.



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May this little messenger find its way into the sanctuary of the heart, and accomplish most effectually the errand upon which it is sent. May Heaven bless these scattered thoughts to the cultivation of a filial spirit, and grant that they may call into exercise those affections which give lustre to the character. May it go forth sowing good seed, and may the mantle of charity be thrown around its blemishes.

MY FATHER.

DID EVER WORDS SO SWEET FALL ON MORTAL EAR.

MY FATHER.

CHAPTER I.

THIS little work, dear reader, the first of a series, is placed in your hands with all its imperfections. Should it meet with approbation, the next number will soon appear.

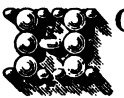
The leisure moments which ever and anon occur to dispel the cares incident to a teacher's life, have been pleasantly occupied in preparing it. The author will feel amply repaid, if this sketch tends in any degree to impress upon the mind the obligations of those who sustain that near-

est of all relations, the parental; or, what is more particularly the design of the work, to awaken a deeper feeling on the part of children, to invite them to greater gratitude, by vividly calling their attention to the debt they owe to their parents, and increase their filial affection, respect, and reverence. However feeble the effort may be, it is hoped the subject itself will arouse the mind to reflection.

The reader will pardon the author, if frequently, in the course of the work, she should allude to her own father, and incidents in the home of her childhood. The fond endearments of earlier days are strongly impressed upon the mind—there is a talisman, a power about them, that sinks far into the inner heart. "The morning welcome, and the sweet good

night" of by-gone days, can never be erased from the memory: they were precious words at the time, they sent a thrill through the heart, and their remembrance is sweet.

CHAPTER II.

 OW touching is the exhibition of natural affection! How appropriate, how beautiful, its manifestations by a parent! Yet, in our own happy land we are so accustomed to see the heart moved by these heaven-inspired emotions, that we lose sight of their great value. To awaken us to a sense of the blessings that we enjoy, it is necessary for us to visit a land where there are fathers, mothers, without natural affection. It would do us good to go forth with the missionary of the cross to the dark places of the earth. We enter a habitation. A large group of children is there, but that

man of a stern brow and a squalid appearance is not he whom the Psalmist describes when he says, "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." That father takes no interest in his little ones. He provides not for their future welfare, denies himself no indulgence for their sakes. Nay, in more than one instance his cruel hand has crushed the early life of those who claimed from him protection and kindness. Or perchance the man of God wanders in meditation along the banks of the Ganges. What step is that which arouses him from his reverie? A mother approaches with her child. She reaches the bank—she pauses—the playful child looks into her face and smiles—those arms are raised. Is the mother about to imprint on its cheek a kiss of

holy love? Ah! the child, the child! its own mother has cast it from her! Its screams fill the air! The waters receive it, and its tender limbs are mangled by the jaws of the crocodile!

Such scenes fill the soul with deep emotion. Callous indeed must be the heart that under the influence of them does not exclaim, How happy am I that I live under other influences; that, instead of cruelty and wrong, I receive naught but kindness and tenderness from my earliest infancy; that I have a father whom I love, not only because he is my father and the duty is incumbent upon me, but also because he possesses those estimable qualities which seize upon the affections, and secure confidence!

The influence of such a parent cannot

well be too highly estimated. He elevates and ennobles the youthful heart that yields itself unreservedly to his plastic hand. The heathen father, and the father in a Christian land who is destitute of natural affection, leaves his offspring to go in the way they list—to be the sport of any circumstances. But the Christian parent watches with intense interest every pursuit, every development of character in the child of his love. The night, as well as the day, witnesses his solicitude. He aims to lay a sure foundation for happiness and prosperity. He is unwearied in his exertions to have eradicated the seeds of evil, and implant the principles of virtue. He checks the ebullition of passion, represses pride and selfishness, and directs the affections to worthy and noble objects.

His influence imparts strength and stability to the character. He lays so firm a hold upon their esteem and love that his counsels are seldom lost: they reach the soul with power, and are held in reverential esteem.

"The kind monition, and the well-earn'd praise,
That won and warn'd us in our earlier days,"

can never be effaced from the page of memory.

Gratitude to the Sovereign Disposer of events, who hath cast our lot in a land where the claims of the child are recognized, and the yearnings of the heart met, is a duty too obvious to require mention; yet, alas! too often entirely overlooked. In the enjoyment of the gift we forget the giver. Yet it is not always so. From

thousands of hearts go forth the warmest expressions of gratitude. Reader, art thou the object of a fond father's care? I know that thou art not unmoved. Thought and feeling are busy within. Thou recallest by-gone days, and viewest with new interest numerous tokens of affection. While your heart expands with grateful emotions under the consciousness that you ever have been the favored object of parental watchfulness, forget not those in our own land whose hearts are not made glad with the smile that beams from a father's face—who know nothing of the kind sympathy that flows from a tender parent's heart. Extend to them the hand of benevolence, and words of kindness, for their life is comparatively a cheerless one. Never do I look upon the

face of an orphan, but with the tenderest feelings, and I trust with benefit to myself, inasmuch as it awakens a lively gratitude in my heart. But ye fatherless ones, murmur not. The Lord of heaven and earth hath said, "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, I will take thee up." O blessed promise! Does it not soothe thy heart, and fill that aching void? Are ye not the favorites of Heaven? Then why repine? O Father in Heaven, we thank thee that thou hast made such the recipients of thy love, that they are the special objects of thy care!

CHAPTER III.

HE love of a parent incites him to act and labor for the comfort and happiness of his children, even after he passes the meridian of life. Why seeks he a pleasant residence? Why plants the shady tree and rears the tender vine? Why watches he the young sapling each morn, and observes its gradual growth with joy? Does he expect to walk under its boughs and cull the fruit from those trees? Ah no—he who has nearly passed his threescore years and ten, clusters those enjoyments around his home, not for himself, but for his family. Well do I remember the touching reproof

I received, when I once said, Father, why expend so much labor and care in rearing those tender shoots? Why each year uproot those trunks which cruel frost has nipped, and replace them by the young and tender tree, since they will not come to maturity till the years in which you could enjoy them will have passed? My child, said he, others are to live after me. When I am laid in yonder graveyard, will not some love to pluck fruit from these trees, and walk under the shadow of their branches? This was a powerful lesson. I was made to feel the importance of living not wholly for myself.

When such a parent is laid low, how vividly will he be remembered; how will every object around the old homestead call his very look to mind—bring to me-

mory his very words! Should some be called by duty, or otherwise to go from that loved spot, and seek a home in some far distant land, how full will be memory's page! The haunts, the walks, the house, and all are before the eye of the mind; even the very looks and expressions of dear ones, are as fresh as if but an hour ago they gazed upon you. Bear with me if I weep awhile; for the bright remembrance of that look, that calmness, and tenderness so inexpressible, that lit up my father's face, calls forth tears. As I now stand gazing on the blue waters of Michigan, as they pass by with their giant waves, it recalls to my mind the times when we were wont to stand by each other's side, and view the calm waters of our own majestic Hudson.

Was it impious, when I said, Let me die ere I bury a parent? I could not live in this cold world without one. Shouldst thou, O Father above, order it otherwise, teach me to say, "Thy will be done."

The education of a child often requires sacrifices on the part of the parent. In order to complete this, it is frequently necessary that a son or a daughter should be sent from the parental roof, and for a season committed to the care of strangers. We speak not of the pecuniary obligation involved in this, but those higher sacrifices that are required. It is no small self-denial for a parent to part with a child. Yet this trial is light compared with the solicitude and anxiety that wears upon his frame when this child is removed from his own immediate supervision. He knows

not what course he may take. Temptations in various forms will assail him; perhaps he will yield. He will be exposed to associates of every kind, perchance he may choose those that will lead him astray. None but those who have experienced it, know the bitterness of such trials. Yet oft they ensure a great reward. With trembling and anxiety the fond parents send forth their son. As he receives his farewell, his father's voice is heard in prayer, "O Lord, lead him not into temptation," while his mother responds, "Deliver him from evil." A shield more effective than brass or iron is thrown around him. Time passes. He returns. The hearts of those who sent him forth weeping are made glad. They perceive that their expectations have been met,

their fondest hopes realized. Not only has the store of knowledge been increased, and the intellect developed and strengthened, but the character has been cast in the right mould. The ambition and the affections of the youth have been directed to proper objects. An incentive to action has been given. A principle of genuine benevolence, a desire to live for high and noble purposes, has been implanted.

Never can *we* forget those devoted ones, who kindled in our hearts the light of intelligence; who moulded our characters; and gave us, as it were, a burning desire to leave all the comforts of a beloved domicil, to dispense light, joy, happiness, and the blessings of intelligence in communities which might otherwise remain *darkened.*

Strong and grateful are my remembrances of my beloved and honored Alma Mater, where was instilled into this heart a glowing love for the human race. How that beloved teacher is treasured in the heart's casket, who, with untiring zeal, taught me to climb the cliffs of knowledge, and gave me that which "mocks the blight of time." When I look for those who traced with me the classic page, toiling for the fruits of knowledge, and find them occupying responsible stations, and exerting a wide influence, I think, with prophetic eye, our teacher must have looked far into the future, and discovered for what she was training each one. A few from that band, may be reckless of their influence; they may have chosen the path of gayety and even folly.

Not so with the majority. Some are gracing a husband's home, rearing his children in the paths of virtue: many are following the footsteps of their leader, in rousing the latent worth of American daughters, kindling the fire of intelligence and virtue in their breasts; in a word, enlightening and elevating mankind. Others are faithfully performing the duties of a devoted pastor's wife, strengthening and supporting him who is bowing beneath the burden of trial and sorrow. Others again have taken their lives, their all, in their hands, and bade adieu to home, parents, brothers, sisters, and other dear friends, to be helpmeets to those who proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ in distant lands. Their zeal, their knowledge, their piety, is felt in the Valley of

the West: and even the dark shores of far-off Africa have welcomed one from that loved throng.

Thanks to him, who, in placing me under such influences, said, "Go and do well:" and ceaseless thanks to the Giver of all blessings.

CHAPTER IV.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

THESE were the words of the beloved disciple to his spiritual children; but may also be applied to every faithful parent. Is it not for the spiritual good of his children that he, each morn and eve, assembles his household around the family altar; and, that he may enlist their feelings in this holy duty, calls upon each to read a chapter from the sacred page; thus accomplishing a double purpose, that of interesting them in this holy duty, and creating a love for the Scriptures?

All know the value of a present. How it is cherished in the affections! With what tender care do we watch it lest some rude hand should mar its beauty! How we shrink as we witness the ever sure effects of the destroying hand of time! The value of a present is enhanced, from the fact that it is presented by the hand of one whom we have ever loved and cherished, who was a friend in our infancy, in the days of our childhood, and who still remains a friend in our maturer years. And then, too, the value of that gift is augmented from its being a precious one—one which will confer on its owner a lasting benefit. Such was the gift each member of our family received from our father. The *Bible* was handed us. Need

I say how highly we prized it? It was our own: then too it was a present in our childhood's days; it took the place of our infantile toys. Well do I remember the zest with which we went to our Bible reading. How many Scriptural biographies and historical naratives were we acquainted with in our youth, because we learned them from our *own* book! Do you not think, dear reader, we loved to study those oracles of Heaven better, than those who must resort to the common Bible of the family? As I now take that holy volume from its shelf, in its cover of green, and turn over its first page, how peculiar are the sensations produced in scanning that well-known hand writing, dated 18—! Twenty years have not ef-

faced from my memory the presentation of that volume, and the impressions with which I received it.

As the love of Scripture is inculcated in very early life, so also may be a spirit of benevolence. When but a prattler, let the child give his penny: what joy thrills through his young heart as he reaches forth his tiny hand, and deposits his savings in the treasury of the poor! Let him increase his mite as his years increase: when he becomes a man, if he does not give periodically, how like a heathen he appears to himself; how conscience-stricken, that he has departed from the path which his father marked out, and in which he trode in early life. Past experience tells, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." How much better men and women

would this world produce, did more fathers inculcate a love for the Bible, and cultivate a spirit of charity as soon as the child knows good from evil. Oh! let us weep for those who have been otherwise trained, and in consequence thereof, have become despisers of religion, and contemners .of the Sabbath, scorning to assemble in the house of God. How lamentable! They cannot say with us, in the language of a gifted poet, Oh! how we love

"The churches where our fathers prayed,
Our Sabbath homes of yore,—
Soon will they all be lowly laid,
To greet our eyes no more.

"Oft have their sacred arches rung
With their glad song of praise;
Our mothers too—they sweetly sung
In those departed days.

"Those aisles our youthful feet have trod,
Those altars too were dear;
Our parents gave us there to God
With heartfelt prayer and tear.

"Within those pews we sought the Lord,
Or sat in silence round,
While our beloved pastors poured
The gospel's joyful sound."

As we retraced our steps homeward from those sacred courts, with what subdued feelings did we seat ourselves around the fireside, conversing upon the truths we had heard, till the sable curtains were drawn over the heavens, and twilight came stealing rapidly on. Then, how overpowering were the feelings on such a holy Sabbath night, as the Christian parents with their entire family were assembled, listening to the songs of praise, as

they broke from the lips, aye, from the hearts of the children. Was not our joy equal to that of the family of old, whom Jesus loved to visit; even that of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus? And yet how oft was the tear wiped silently away, lest it should be observed!

Why fell that tear from our mother's eye, and from our own? We were all there; no wayward one was absent; all were receiving blessings beneath the parental roof. I say all were there; yes, all save three bright cherubs, whom our heavenly Father had taken from the evil to come, and received into his own bosom: yet did not their unseen spirits, at such times, hover over us with looks of love, bearing witness to our sanctified joys? Then why fell the tear? Methinks I can

tell. Were we not thinking how happy we were, of God's goodness to us, and contrasting our own happy lot with thousands who have never felt joy like ours? Joy as well as grief will have her tears. Though great the distance between me and my father's house, those Sabbath nights are in fresh remembrance. Though they have "fled on the wings of youth's departed years," their holy joys are present still.

CHAPTER V.

"Domestic happiness, thou only bliss,
That hast survived the fall."

IN all its exhibitions it is indeed blissfull: but in this little work, we must pass by its many enchantments, and not even catalogue its thousand endearments. Time would fail me to tell of a mother's love, a sister's affection, and the devotion of loved brothers, of the evening firesides, of the festal board, the family rides, the reception of loved relatives, the interchange of feelings, the relation of pleasing incidents, extending of the sympathies of the heart, and giving of the helpful hand, the joy of meeting after a temporary absence, &c., &c.

Yet I cannot forbear adverting to the love of a daughter for a father. It is a principle cherished in the hearts of many of my readers, a principle that I would fain strengthen and confirm; for it is one of the holiest and purest of our nature. The joy that springs up in the heart in doing for a parent, in anticipating his wants, in removing causes of care and anxiety, and multiplying sources of enjoyment, the delight that fills it even to overflowing when the smile of gratification that these actions have called forth is seen beaming on his countenance, can be equalled only by the agony and remorse that must rend the heart of the thoughtless and neglectful child when such a friend is laid low in death.

In this connection we may also remark,

that the effect of association is most powerful.

The most hardened may be subdued, if you but revert to former days. How many a prodigal has been restored to the paths of virtue, if a familiar acquaintance but touched that tender chord, by speaking of his home, his parent's prayers, his mother's love!

And how will the tenderest of all feelings be awakened in the heart of him, who, years since, wandered far from a father's house, and from a mother's care, when he meets a familiar face, and is told the grass has grown tall upon his parents' graves! How sudden the shock! How speechless he becomes!

CHAPTER VI.

BEDIENCE is not only the duty but the privilege of a child. There is in it something peculiarly lovely. There is in harmony a beauty that touches the soul. This is true, not only of sweet sounds, but of relations. The obedient child meets the obligations that arise from his relations. His filial spirit is in harmony with the care and tenderness of the parent. It is felt to be so by man universally. There is a chord in every human heart that any remarkable display of filial obedience will cause to vibrate.

But the exhibition of a lovely spectacle,

a spectacle that softens and humanizes the heart, is not the only advantage arising from a filial spirit. The world is indeed thus benefited. A little child is often a powerful preacher; he reaches at times hearts that are closed to every other influence. But always to those susceptible of impression he gives his lessons. "Faber, I want some bread," said a little child, just able to speak, to his parent, who was engaged in conversation with a guest at his table. Not being heeded, he repeated his request. As he was still unregarded, he laid his hand on his arm and said again, with earnestness, "Faber, I want some bread." His parent still paid no attention. The child was silent a moment, then, with a look full of submission, said, "Well, Faber, I can wait till morning."

But, beneficial as this influence is, it is not here that the advantage of obedience stops. Nor does it stop with the joy with which it fills the heart of the parent. It extends to the child; it fills him with peace and satisfaction. It is to him a well-spring of happiness. It exerts, too, the happiest influence upon the character. Obedience to a parent is a type of obedience to God, and prepares the way for that surrender of the heart which is so justly required of us, and which alone can secure our eternal felicity.

The instance which has furnished the gifted Mrs. Hemans a subject for one of her beautiful effusions, is too touching and instructive to be passed by.

A commander of a ship of war was at

one time engaged in a battle upon the Nile. His son, a brave boy of thirteen, stood by his side in the heat of the engagement, amidst shot and blood. His father gave him some service to perform in a particular part of the ship, telling him to remain at his post, till he should call him away. As the father went to another part of the vessel, a ball from the enemy ended his existence. The son, unconscious of this, remained firm to his post. The battle raged—the ship took fire—all were deserting her, and the boy cried out, "Father, may I go?" He knew not the mangled and lifeless body of his father lay below, and wondered why he stayed. Filled with terror, and eagerly looking for his coming, his spirit

near by shrunk within him. But preferring *death* to disobedience, this noble-hearted boy perished in the flames.

CASABIANCA.

"The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck,
Shone round him o'er the dead.

"Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though childlike form.

"The flames roll'd on,—he would not go
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

"He called aloud—'Say, Father, say
If yet my task is done?'
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"'Speak, Father!' once again he cried,
'If I may yet be gone!'
And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

"Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair;
And look'd from that lone post of death,
In still, yet brave despair.

"And shouted but once more aloud,
'My Father! must I stay?'
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

"They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child
Like banners in the sky.

"Then came a burst of thunder sound—
The boy—oh! where was he?
Ask of the winds, that far around
With fragments strewed the sea!

" With mast, and helm, and pennant fair,
That well had borne their part—
But the noblest thing that perished there,
Was that young, faithful heart."

CHAPTER VII.

"How like a serpent's tooth to have a thankless child."

CAN it be, that there is one who allows his ingratitude like a serpent's tooth to pierce the heart of him, to whom he has been indebted even from the earliest dawn of his existence? Can it be, there is one who so far forgets his filial duties? Would there were none. But every day facts too plainly portray the depravity even of youth. Not only are a father's counsels despised, but his claims are forgotten.

How many have gone from beneath a parent's roof and mingled in the cold world, till, independently of him, they

have increased in riches! Like the prodigal they took their father's earnings on which to accumulate; but not like the prodigal, did they return. Ah! that they would seek that home, and gaze upon the distress, poverty, and anguish that now reign in that once peaceful abode.

Lift the curtain and discover the cause of this change. In all the fullness of a father's love, this kind parent had unsparingly distributed his substance to those sons, who he had hoped would hereafter "rise up and call him blessed."

Unforeseen circumstances scattered, as upon the wings of the wind, the small pittance he had reserved for himself. A raging fever laid him low. The Prince of Tyrants, as he strode on in his might, entered his dwelling and left his hearth

desolate. Grim poverty then stared him in the face. The aged man looked around, and thus soliloquized: Yonder grave has snatched from my side my loved companion, and relentlessly dragged her beneath its portals. Consumption has imprinted its impress upon the brow of my dear and only daughter, telling me too plainly I must soon bid her farewell. To every yearning desire, poverty, cold poverty, is the only reply. Where, Oh! where are the sons upon whom I lavished my goods? Do they know their father's destitution? They cannot. They have not become callous: they have not lost all feeling of humanity. If they but saw me now, how their hearts would yearn over their aged sire—how they would heap comforts upon these gray hairs!

The reverie was soon broken: reality was before him, and spoke in thunder tones. Repeatedly has the post carried tidings of their father to those proud sons. They silence the voice of conscience. The lonely cot of their father does not comport with their high nobility. Weeks pass. The same morning sun that beams upon their elegance in the great metropolis, shines with its genial ray upon that afflicted man, upon his pallet of straw, as the appointed officer hurries him to the mercy of those who care for the county's poor. Oh! base ingratitude! We would close our eyes on such moral deformity, and dwell upon it only as a warning to youth to fear its first beginnings in the heart, and repel it as a poisoned arrow.

Would that I were ignorant of the ex-

hibitions of ingratitude among my own sex! I blush too much for you, O ye daughters! to unveil any thing so unlovely.

One who forgets a father, forgets a constant benefactor—one who has not only provided for present wants, but also for those which will not be felt till he is no more. Such a friend is one to whom every kindly feeling of the heart should be drawn out. Neglect of such an one may well be placed in the catalogue of crimes.

The design of this chapter has been to show the value of gratitude by contrast. But we must add a word upon the principle itself. Yet this is hardly necessary. For who has not experienced its joys? *Who does not* realize that it is a source of

exquisite, of indescribable pleasure? Who is not ready to subscribe to the sentiment of an eminent philosopher, who says, "If we owed no other gratitude to our Creator, we should still be indebted to him for this, at least, that he has made gratitude itself so delightful."

CONCLUSION.

HAT a blessing is a kind father! But if the thought of a parent calls forth every tender emotion of the heart, how much more the thought of a Father in heaven, whose watchful eye never closes, whose love never fails—who, when father and mother forsake us, will take us up.

Our Father, who art in heaven: hallowed be thy name. Subdue these hearts of ours—purify, sanctify them; and when thou callest us hence, grant us, and those whom we love, a seat at thy right hand, where flow blessings for evermore!

MY MOTHER.

'TIS THE HOLIEST NAME ON EARTH.

MY MOTHER.

CHAPTER I.

"It may be Autumn, yea, Winter, with the woman, but with the mother, as a mother, it is always Spring."

OTHER! it is a name that possesses a charm, that calls up a thousand tender recollections. It is not only the holiest, but the most endearing name, one that makes every fibre of the heart thrill. The tear that moistened our infant cheek was wiped by her hand. The grief that swelled our infant heart was soothed by her voice. Her love to us is next to that of our Saviour's.

How tenderly did our Saviour himself look upon this blessed relation, when, in his last agonizing hours, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son!" and to the beloved disciple, "Behold thy mother!" and from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

That the remembrance of a mother is never effaced is touchingly illustrated in the instance of a Christian friend who, in the last moments of life, when it was supposed all communications with mortals had ceased, spelled with her fingers, in the dialect of the deaf and dumb, the word "Mother."

The child knows where to find sympathy. Have you never, when sitting by your window watching the sports of children as they were released from the Ar-

gus eye of the schoolmaster on a Saturday afternoon, seen them fall out by the way, and sometimes in words, and sometimes in action, give proof of their natural depravity? Did you observe when one spoke unkindly, and perchance did show his muscular strength upon his companion, that the offended one would cry out, "I'll tell mother?" Why was it? He knew of her sympathetic heart. He felt that she shared not only in his joys but in his sorrows—those little trials of the young that are as keenly felt as greater trials in sterner manhood—that his mother would wipe the tear from his cheek as she listened to the story of his wrong, and that she was ever interested in all his childish affairs.

When youth's thoughtlessness was mine, how often did I wonder at my mother's discomposure, when a member of the family failed to return at the expected time! Hour followed hour, and as darkness rapidly succeeded the light of day, her anxiety would grow more and more intense. If at last thick clouds enveloped the sky, her mental suffering seemed intolerable. How often would she lay down the needle, walk hastily to the window, and with hands raised to screen the light of the inner room, look upon the darkness without, and suppress her breath in hopes of hearing the sound of the carriage wheels; and when the distant rumbling was heard, how did hope lighten her eye, and with it her heart, till the

sound of the vehicle passed the door! Thus hope would again and again give way to despair. How little knew we of that mother's feelings! Had we known more, how much more intense would have been our love for one who felt so deeply for us!

O that fount of feeling that is sealed up in a mother's heart! Who can estimate its intensity, or fathom its depths? How can one look with contempt upon maternal counsels? How can any treat their best earthly friend with unkindness? If no other consideration checked their high-handed wickedness, their temporal happiness and ease of mind might be a restraint; for how keen must be the reflection of neglect to a dear mother, when she is no more. According to the testi-

mony of many, we may repent of our sin, and God may forgive us, but we can never forgive ourselves. The remembrance will ever sting as doth an adder.

CHAPTER II.

"On earth the tree of weeping grows
Fast by man's side where'er he goes,
And o'er its brightest joys its bitterest essence flows."

OW often has a parent's heart been almost riven asunder, as her much-loved son is brought into her presence red from the battle field; or perhaps tidings from her long absent child tells her how the ocean's depths received him beneath its billowy waves! She had but him, and as she still lingers in her deserted abode, she thinks perhaps he has found a Jonah's home, or been sundered by the teeth of the murder-loving shark, or may be dwelling in silence

with the coral insect, among the many beautifully pencilled shells and pearls.

What mother will not bare her own bosom to the steel to save the sleeping babe! More than this, she will stand between her grown-up son and an ignominious death! Many a mother has taken the scaffold, and presented herself to the executioner's axe, to save the guilty one whom justice had condemned. How changed that countenance! Once innocence stamped its image on that noble brow—now shame and disgrace is there impressed: but a mother's feelings know no change. It is her own same son.

The mother patiently watches by the bedside of the sufferer through the long still hours of night, hearing no sound save the groans of the sick and dying one. A

silent tear ever and anon trickles down her furrowed cheek, but still she swerves not from duty, but watches over the dear one till the light of Orion, Pleiades, and Arcturus is melted away into the tints of Aurora's beams—even then does she reluctantly yield to the solicitations of her companion, to resign her charge to his care while she recruits her wasted frame.

When I behold the mendicant in the street, the poor outcast without shelter, destitute of wherewith to meet the demands of nature, I involuntarily exclaim, that poor despised one has parents who love him as my parents love me, and they are perhaps this moment weeping over their loved one, lost, lost in reputation, lost to happiness, and more than lost to his friends—friends too who once looked

upon him with delight, with pride, and fond anticipations. How are all earthly hopes blasted! Disappointments, how thick they stand around, enveloping the heart in darkness that may be felt!

There is another situation in which a mother experiences sorrow. When her infant is removed, her heart-strings seem severed; but while weeping over its death, one blessed consolation suggests itself. It is this, that the little innocent has no tear of remorse to shed, no penitential sigh to utter, no neglected duty to sorrow over. Through a Saviour's righteousness it is made pure and spotless as the angels above, and like that glorious band will ever strike the golden harps in the kingdom above. Bereaved mother, rememberest thou not those comforting words,

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Then dry those tears, cease thy mourning, and so live that when Christ maketh up his jewels, you shall be welcomed by those sinless ones who have gone before you to occupy a place in the diadem of your elder brother's crown. It is easier to speak words of comfort to others, methinks I hear you say, than to bear the loss yourself; those only who have experienced like afflictions can sympathize deeply. I have been spared thus far, thank God, from tasting the bitter cup of burying a child: but there is one to whom you can go in the dark hour of affliction and receive comfort; his sorrows were greater than thine, and he tells you to cast your care upon

him, for he careth for you. The infant "lies still and is quiet—it sleeps, and is at rest,"—at rest with Jesus; but how heart-rending is the thought that one should be taken in riper years, when this world with all its bright prospects is opening before him, while the parent has no hope that the promising son or lovely daughter has found that peace that cometh from above; has no evidence of their happiness beyond the skies! How wise to spare ourselves such a pang, and train up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," so that when they are called hence, we shall be assured they have received a crown of rejoicing!

CHAPTER III.

"Happy is he who knows a mother's love."

ITH what sincerity doth a mother pour forth, in the anguish of her spirit, supplications for her dear children! How disinterested are those tears and those intercessions; when, on the bended knee, she prays for the little *infant* that it may become an heir of heaven! *Childhood* is remembered before the mercy seat, that its waywardness may be brought in subjection to that of God, and its rebellious passions subdued. The devoted parent then most earnestly pleads that *youth* and advancing *manhood* may be withdrawn

from every vicious path and sinful indulgence, and that the Gospel may be a light to guide them in all their ways. And when her locks are silvered ever so white, and her limbs do totter to that accustomed haunt of prayer, then doth she most fervently intercede with God for her son, who is swallowed in business, the prey of avarice or mad ambition, notwithstanding here and there may be seen the whitened hair, the mark that age has planted among those raven locks. Then she prays for her eldest, for all her children, and her children's children. A mother's prayer ceases not in adverse hours, and in days of prosperity she remembereth from whom cometh blessings, and who alone giveth life everlasting. Thank God, my mother still lives to pray for me,

and each day bears me to the mercy seat.

A mother's love is indescribable; the poverty of language forbids its recital; pomp or circumstance makes no change; it is the same whether she dwells in the gorgeous hall illuminated by the dazzling girandoles and the bright chandeliers, or in the lonely hut, which knows no light within its doors save that which nature gives. When the pale moon withdraws her light, then lovely Venus sheds her benignant rays, and by its light the mother finds the way to the spot where with her little one she kneels in prayer. Years roll on; changes and misfortunes occur. One becomes an exile, and while far separated from all he holds dear, remembers those youthful days, those devoted pray-

ers, and feels again that sainted hand upon his head.

The difference between the Christian and heathen mother is often dwelt upon. While the parent in enlightened countries will endure the watchings, the care, the wakeful nights and wearisome days over the sick bed without a murmur; the heathen parent, without remorse, without natural affection and its thousand sources of joy, will, with the utmost composure, take the innocent life of the new-born babe! While such unparalleled sin will surely meet its due reward, and ever excites the most painful reflections, I cannot but think that it is much better for those little ones to be taken away, than to spend an existence with cruel, vicious parents, who will teach them every form of wickedness prev-

alent in a benighted land. Is not God merciful to suffer these millions of mother-murdered children to be taken away from the evil to come—to be taken from a heathen life, a heathen education, from a heathen's death, and a heathen's eternity? Can a Christian mother, in view of her high privileges, when on a bended knee forget to supplicate for those benighted ones, and also to give of her substance as the Lord hath prospered her, that the Bible, the precious Bible, and the man of God with the missionary wife, may teach them that God is well pleased to have them spare their little ones, to bring them up as his messengers shall direct, to throw around them knowledge and religion? With these will follow natural affection, paternal love, social ties,

and all those heaven-born emotions of which the mind is susceptible. As we press with fondness our little ones to us, and love them with a pureness with which no other earthly emotion can vie, and teach them of heaven and a heaven's God, let our hearts go out after the African mother, the Burman parent, and the daughters of India, who know of none but earthly gods.

CHAPTER IV.

—"Where hath not woman stood,
Strong in affection's might?
A reed, upborne
By an o'ermastering current!"

WANDERER of earth, through whatever scenes thy path is led, stop, and with a grateful heart render thanks to the Almighty that you were so pre-eminently blessed in having a good mother. She moulded thy character, trained thy moral being, and, by the blessing of God, made thee what thou art. Her chidings, her reproofs, her pleadings in thy early days, were evident proofs of the solicitude of a parent. A

voice whispered in her ear, Thy son will soon become a man; fit him for life, its duties, its cares, its responsibilities, and so direct him that he will act his part well hereafter. Years have hurried on. Have you honors? That mother who is now in her grave wreathed around your brow those honors by her judicious training. Is fame yours? She gave it thee, and twined its laurels by early culture. Has your intellect become mighty, so that the ancient lore of ages is as familiar as thine own native tongue? She taught thee habits of patient industry and perseverance. Are you graced with a lovely wife? It was thy mother who insensibly taught thee gentleness, and smoothed thy rough asperities, so that beauty and grace acknowledged thy excellencies. And what

is of far more precious value, do you love to pray? Are you a lamb of the Redeemer's flock? She taught thy infantile lips to lisp the name of Jesus, told thee of God, of heaven, and of eternity. Then hast thou not cause to pause, and bless her memory at every step in thy pilgrimage? Thy gift was an invaluable one. She has gone before thee. Thou wilt cherish her counsels, walk in her footsteps, and when thine earthly mission is done, thou wilt meet her above, where, in the height of her joy, she will exclaim, "Here am I, O Lord, and the child thou hast given me." An angel might well glory in the work that is intrusted to the hands of mothers. They are to direct the immortal mind, to guide the undying soul, and fit the inhabitants

of this middle world to become as angels of light in realms above. Such, by the blessing of God, is their privilege. If they fail, theirs may be the grief of seeing the children of their love, fiends of darkness in the depths of the nether world.

How many, like Washington, "upon whom recorded honors have thickened around," are indebted to virtuous mothers. Who would not rather be a George Washington, and step boldly forth in the uprightness of his character and say, It was I who cut down the young cherry-tree, than to be a Napoleon Bonaparte and slaughter more than two millions of men? With what different feelings do we now reflect upon the character of these two great men, the one great in goodness, the

other great only in conquest and crime. The striking contrast between the mothers of these individuals is the key to the contrast of their characters.

The responsibilities of a mother are exceeding great. She directs the hearts of kings and emperors, who rule mighty nations; she moulds the character of the senators of wisdom, as also that of the president of our happy republic. She sends the missionary to a dark and distant coast, and fills our pulpits with the faithful preacher, and our communities with the friendly pastor. She prepares the instructors for our youth, wields the destiny of individuals, of families, and of nations. Her magic power is exerted in forming for their respective situations, all who come under her influence—the partner

for the herald of the cross, the pastor's companion, the female teacher, the wife, the mother, daughter, and sister.

Mothers, if you doubt that the future character of your son reflects upon your past conduct, and speaks loudly your own heart and character, visit the prisons, penitentiaries, and jails, and question the inmates respecting their mothers. They will tell you of her indolence, her absences from home, her visits to the ball, the opera, and other gay assemblies. When their tale is told, "shake off the dust from your feet," and visit an institution of another character. Enter one of the theological seminaries of our favored land: those pious students will tell you, while the tear of gratitude stands in their eye, of their mother's domestic virtues, of her

consistent life, and her prayers, and how she taught them to bend their steps to the house of worship, and there listen to the messages of love, to attend to their immortal souls, and the Saviour who died for them.

Meagre language, thy poverty makes a mockery of all description. The fullness of this subject can be inscribed only upon the unwritten pages of the heart.

"Thanks for a mother's precious love,
Thanks to its author, God above;
May this rich boon for me remain
Long as I tread this world of pain."

CHAPTER V.

"Ye, who mourn
Whene'er yon vacant cradle, or the robes
That decked the lost one's form, call back a tide
Of alienated joy, can ye not trust
Your treasure to His arms, whose changeless care
Passeth a mother's love? Can ye not hope
When a few hasting years their course have run,
To go to one, who'll no more on earth
Return to you?
And when glad Faith doth catch
Some echo of celestial harmonies,
Archangels' praises, with the high response
Of cherubim, and seraphim, oh think—
Think that your babe is there."

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

AST thou never, dear reader, received an elegant present from a friend, and in thine inmost soul *did feel* the gift too precious, too unmerit-

ed, and said, Kind one, take it back? So, methinks, the mother tries to feel when death has nipped her darling, so pure, so lovely. The undefiled one must be returned to God,—the God who gave it to her.

Fond mother, has the dread Tyrant ever entered thy abode, and stolen from thee a treasure? Has it ever been thy lot to cry out in the bitterness of thy soul, My child is dead, dead, dead? Ah! there are many, and O how many, who can sympathize with thee, and mingle their tears with thine. Where is the country, the community, the neighborhood, and I almost said the family, that has not thus suffered? She who is penning these lines has had her bosom thus lacerated, and can mourn with you. God granted

unto me a lovely child, the most beautiful, the most gifted of his creatures, with every development uncommonly matured; with an eye so full of glory, so full of unearthly light, that while I embraced her with transports of joy, I held her with fear; trembling came upon me, lest one so lovely should not tarry long beneath the skies; lest one so meet for heaven, with goodness expressed in every look, a heavenly smile in every glance, should be permitted to stop here only long enough for us to have some faint conception of the inhabitants of the world above, to give us an instance of the purity and innocence of those who inhabit the world of light. Those sad fears were realized. The monster came, and in a moment snatched her from me. May not a fond mother allevi-

ate the lone hours of bereavement with reflections like these: Oh! thou lovely angel babe! how can I give thee up? Thou wert the comfort of my soul, the light of my eyes, the joy of my heart; thy smile dispelled every care; ah yes, when this world did frown, and freeze me with its icy coldness, when trials and perplexities heaped upon me, as they will with those who have with this world to to do, then would I embrace thee, and sorrow did quickly flee away, and all gloomy thoughts take to themselves wings. As a mother's fond affection read unutterable things in thy deep dark eye (the mirror of thy soul), and in the fullness of her love unconsciously exclaimed, My dear, dear little angel—how my heart would check itself lest it might be prophetic, for

O! I felt that I could not for a moment be separated from thee, even to permit thee to join that angelic throng. In my desperate wickedness, how I would say, Thou art mine—yes, mine. In the madness of my love, thou wert my joy, my happiness, my idol, yea, my god; and when thou wert indeed gone, my depravity was such, I could have torn thee from Paradise. What a rebellious mother hadst thou! O God! forgive me this sin. Where dwellest now my babe? In heaven—where thou art, in sweetest strains, proclaiming thy heavenly Father's glory. Did we not, as we lingered around thy dying pillow, catch a glimpse of what thy future state would be, and had we not evidence that thou hadst already entered upon thy unending joys, even at the very

moment thou wert leaving us? Else, what meant that lovely smile upon thy face, that unearthly expression of delight, of untold joys? That earnest look which, from the crowd that pressed around thy dying pillow, singled out thy father and thy mother, that sweet smile that in the last moment brightened those features, to our breaking hearts spoke thus: Father, mother, farewell. I love you well, but I leave you—a bright land, a happy shore is before me.

If in heaven they lift their hearts in prayer, blessed babe thou hast near access to God; pray for thy sorrowing mother, that her rebellious heart may be subdued, that she may bow in sweet submission to the dispensations of the Almighty. Thou hast left a void nought on earth can fill;

pray that the love of God may more than make good thy loss, that the riches of his grace may fill this heart, and that I may with sincerity say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord:"—and once more pray, that she may be fitted for the blessed mansions which thou inhabitest. Another boon I crave: sometimes when thy mother is doing her errand here on earth, speeding the youth of our land upwards and onwards, look from thine abode, and urge her on to do the bidding of her Master. If this you did, unceasing labor would never tire; the thought that a little spirit above was interested in her training of young immortals, would inspire new energy, new zeal.

Then, when thy mother sittest in her

solitude, in the retirement of her chamber, visit her at those hours most meet for meditation; hover near, let thy young spirit witness the falling tear, the heaving sigh, and may the Holy Spirit let me feel thy presence; then there would be bliss in grief. And if one that maketh such high music in heaven can for a little moment be spared, come down, and let me see thee in my dreams, let me gaze into that bright eye that has gained new lustre by companionship with angels, and in my dreams clasp thee in my arms. Oh! it will be like a little visit to thee; and these little visits, may they be oft repeated, till that long one shall commence that knows no end: thou wilt then be versed in the language of the skies, and canst teach thy mother the praises of Emmanuel, yea,

teach her how to live in heaven, with more than all the ardor she once anticipated teaching thee the language of earth, and how to live below the skies.

"I know that she is happy,
With her angel plumage on;
But my heart is very desolate,
To think that she is gone."

Yes, my child is gone. No mortal could keep her here. Just before the sun passed behind the western hills on the last day of winter, she left us, and "was not, for God took her," to commence her spring in a clime which knows no season, and to dwell among those of whom it is said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Thanks are due; he lent her for a little season; the loan was prized —she made those months of her tarrying

here, the brightest and greenest of life—it was as if an extra ray of sunbeam had found its way into our dwelling. Yes, lovely Summer gave thee birth—Autumn's rich breath fanned thy cheek; and Winter, more mild than wont, beheld thy opening charms; and with its last hours thou fleddest, to enter upon thy Spring in heaven.

CONCLUSION.

THIS little work was about completed when an afflictive stroke was permitted to fall upon the author. In the preceding pages, with a lovely and only child upon her knee, she wrote, "I know not the bitterness of burying a child." No longer will we "boast of to-morrow, for we know not what a day may bring forth." Since these pages were written, the unerring stroke of the destroyer has made the author childless. May all who have been bereaved of their heart's idols, be enabled to utter the touching exclamation of the Queen of France, when informed of the

death of her daughter, Marie of Wurtemberg,—"My God, I have a daughter less, but thou hast an angel more."

"There was a shepherd once, whose tender care
Was ever o'er his flock. By night and day
He watched and guarded them. In pastures led
Them carefully, and when they thirsted, he
Brought them to the clear waters. Him, they loved
To follow, and would fondly lick his hand,
In sign of strong attachment.
All, but one,—
A sheep that ever frowardly did rove,
And heeded not the shepherd. Kindness, he
Lavished in vain, for she would have her will,
And neither heard his voice nor loved his step.
Her master, seeing all endeavor vain,
To win her from her wanderings, took her lamb,
But, gently—in his arms, and went his way.
Immediately, the sheep, submissive, followed.

Mother! that weepest for thy little babe,
Taken, to win thy wayward step to heaven—
Say, *Was the shepherd cruel?*"

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